

Thalos 286

Chapter 286: Have I Overestimated You?

Unlike the two unfortunate gods whose domains were directly impacted and thus triggered the Prophecy of Destruction, Tefnut and Geb fared slightly better—the prophecy touched them, yes, but their corresponding divine authorities hadn't yet suffered a full-force collapse.

What they didn't know was that Ra, the Egyptian creator god, had also been affected.

He was not a god-king, but his status as a progenitor granted him universal reverence among the Egyptian gods.

As a self-created deity born from the chaotic waters, Ra had fathered Shu and Tefnut and contented himself with the role of solar deity. His position was so exalted that neither Horus nor Set dared to ask him to take sides.

But now, with the sky seized, Egypt was too weakened to resist. If the sky—the platform that carried the sun—had fallen, then what future did the sun itself have?

Amid the dark-red clouds, glowing with a dying twilight, a god with a falcon's head and a golden sun disc atop his crown stood alone upon the cracked base of an ancient sundial. Reflected within his strange golden pupils was a collapsing sun.

In this self-contained world, the sun was not a true star. It was more like a decorative fixture glued to the world's spatial barrier.

Now that the sky was gone, so was its anchor. The sun began to disintegrate.

The cracks on Ra's gilded robes mirrored those on the fractured sun above. The solar staff in his left hand shed fragments of fire-patterned crystal, while divine blood leaked from between the seams of his right gauntlet, each drop hissing into the air like molten lava.

The twelve sunstones on his crown burst one after another, and the sun glyph on his brow flickered erratically, its brilliance fading to a ghostly gray. When he looked up at the extinguished solar core, his gaze was like a candle at the end of its wick—flickering, wavering, with only a faint plume of blue smoke left behind.

His divine body was covered in a spiderweb of fractures.

Beneath him, the cracked solar pedestal let out a final wail before collapsing. Ra and his entire temple plummeted into the abyss of eternal night like a burning mass of golden-red flame.

With the last ray of sunlight extinguished, the entire Egyptian world had, in a sense, become a participant in the funeral of their creator and sun god.

It had all happened so suddenly that both Horus and Set stood frozen in shock.

A chilling realization seized them: If we kill each other, only to leave everything behind for some foreign god-king to take, won't we just end up as cosmic fools?

How utterly humiliating.

But if Horus and Set were feeling awkward, it was the gods on both sides of the war who were truly squirming in fear.

They were not blind to the collapse of their world.

The signs of destruction had long been visible, but like gamblers, they'd ignored them. For Set, it had started with murdering his brother to seize divine kingship. Horus, in turn, had rebelled to avenge his father. Their followers joined this protracted divine war for ideals, power, and ambition.

Both sides had lost loved ones and subordinates. Blood feuds had been forged. Their sunk costs were monumental.

This was why neither faction could stop. They were compelled to keep fighting, even as their world crumbled around them.

And now... Thalos had arrived.

More avatars of the Aesir gods materialized behind Thalos, each successively smaller, projected into the multi-layered spatial rift at his back.

Simultaneously, as Ra fell and night consumed Egypt, a new sun rose—the avatar of Freyr, the new solar deity, had appeared.

Golden light poured over the world once more, illuminating every god on the battlefield. The sensation was like being slapped across the face, repeatedly, by reality itself.

A flood of unfamiliar gods, numbering in the hundreds, stilled the very wind.

Horus and Set exchanged a glance, silently backing away from each other. Their gazes turned to the unwelcome guests who had suddenly claimed the center of the world.

They waited—for an explanation. Any explanation, even a lie, would do.

The black-haired, black-eyed god-king among them sighed deeply, as though mourning something ancient.

"Sigh... Have I overestimated you all?"

Overestimated?

Neither Horus nor Set were in human form: Horus bore the falcon head, clad in a crown and linen kilt, grasping the Was scepter and Ankh symbol; Set appeared as a humanoid with a long snout, squared ears, and upright tail.

Even though they had no human faces, the embarrassment on their expressions was unmistakably clear. It was the kind of shame that could make you want to dig a pyramid-sized hole beneath your feet and disappear.

Thalos made no effort to save face. He simply continued, as if speaking to himself:

"I must admit—due to an accident, the now-fallen Mayan god-king Komu cast the Prophecy of Destruction not upon my Ginnungagap world, where it was meant to fall, but upon your world instead. And you two—because of your incompetence—failed to kill each other, to unify your pantheon, and in doing so, missed every opportunity to save Egypt. I... am deeply disappointed in you."

What?!

Horus and Set both felt the sting of shame double in intensity—like being whipped in the face by their deadliest enemy.

Regret, sorrow, helplessness, fury—a storm of emotion surged within them.

They wanted to curse and scream, but reality was cruel: not only was Thalos's main body stronger than theirs, even his avatars utterly dwarfed them in divine light. Their own power was like a candle before the sun, utterly outmatched.

With such a chasm in strength, resistance was meaningless.

Horus clenched his fists, his muscles bulging, his cheeks puffed in frustration. Still too young and too stubborn, he roared:

"My father was murdered—I must avenge him! And this is about divine legitimacy—I cannot yield!"

No sooner had he spoken than Set screamed:

"I, Set, am the one true god-king!"

Thalos cast a disdainful glance at both would-be kings and let out a quiet laugh.

"One for revenge, one for power. Hmph... you both have your reasons. But to let your world be destroyed over it? That's just idiotic."

His thunderous voice echoed across the shattered sky, reverberating into every corner of the world, shaking the hearts of gods and mortals alike.

Horus shouted again, voice shrill and hoarse: "What else was I supposed to do?!"

Set said nothing—his hunger for power was etched into his eyes like a brand.

"I gave you more than a year. In that time, you neither saved your world, nor killed your foe to unify your pantheon. You didn't even seek help from beyond." Thalos's voice turned solemn, his verdict declared:

"So I've lost faith in your capabilities."

"Since Egypt can no longer be saved, the only thing I can do—when the world collapses—is to salvage some slaves, and reclaim the elements of earth, water, fire, and wind from this realm."